AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A game machine for executing a predetermined game in response to a player's operation, comprising:

a display ~~means~~ for displaying a game screen;

operation switches operated by the player;

communications ~~means~~ section for performing data communications among other game machines;

start timing synchronization ~~means~~ section for establishing start-timing synchronization with said other game machines in the game by communications via said communications ~~means~~section;

prompt information storage ~~means~~ section for storing operation timing data defining an operation timing of said operation switches to be operated by the player;

a display ~~control means~~ controller for having, in response when the game is synchronously started, said display ~~means~~ display~~ed~~ information about the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player based on said operation timing data;

first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section for storing data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player responding to the information displayed on said display ~~means~~;

second operation timing storage ~~means~~ section for acquiring and storing the data which is stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section of said other game machines through communications via said communications ~~means~~section; and

correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section for evaluating correlation in terms of game operation with said other game machines based on the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section and said second operation timing storage ~~means~~section.

2. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 1, further comprising independent evaluation ~~means~~ section for evaluating whether the timing based on the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section is in a predetermined range from the timing based on said operation timing data.

3. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein said correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section evaluates whether both the timing based on the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section

and the timing based on the data stored in said second operation timing storage ~~means~~ section are in a predetermined range.

4. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 3, wherein said correlation evaluation ~~means~~ evaluates, by using, as a criterial timing, the timing based on either the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section or the data stored in said second operation timing storage ~~means~~ section whichever being the operation timing closest to the operation timing defined by said operation timing data at a predetermined timing, from the criterial timing based on one of the data, whether the timing based on the other data is in the predetermined range.

5. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein said correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section evaluates:

(i) whether the timing based on either the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section or the data stored in said second operation timing storage ~~means~~ section is in a predetermined range from the timing based on said operation timing data at a predetermined timing, and

(ii) whether both the timing based on one of the data and the timing based on the other data are in the predetermined range.

6. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein

said prompt information storage ~~means~~ section stores the operation timing data defining a plurality of the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player,

evaluation timing setting ~~means~~ section is further provided for setting at least one of the plurality of the operation timings based on said operation timing data as an evaluation timing, and

said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section stores the data relating to the operation timing corresponding to said evaluation timing.

7. (withdrawn) The game machine according to claim 1, further comprising:

a sound ~~generation means~~ generator for generating a predetermined sound in response to said operation switches whichever operated; and

part selection ~~means~~ section for selecting one of a plurality of parts relating to music play, wherein

said prompt information storage ~~means~~ section stores the operation timing data defining a plurality of the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player at least for the part selected by said part selection ~~means~~section, and

said display ~~control means~~ controller has said display ~~means displayed~~ displays the information about the operation timings of said operation switches relating to at least the part selected by said part selection ~~means~~ section out of the information based on said operation timing data.

8. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein

said communications ~~means~~ section is used for infrared communications,

said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section stores the data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player during a predetermined segment of the game,

said second operation timing storage ~~means~~ section acquires and stores the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section of said other game machines for each of the predetermined segment of the game, and

said correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section evaluates, for each of the predetermined segment of the game, correlation with said other game machines in terms of game operation based on the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section and in said second operation timing storage ~~means~~section.

9. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 3, wherein said correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section differs ~~the~~ a number of points to

be added depending on a difference between the timing based on the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section and the timing based on the data stored in said second operation storage ~~means~~section.

10. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 5, wherein said correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section differs ~~the~~ a number of points to be added depending on both a difference between the timing based on said one of data and the timing based on said operation timing data, and a difference between the timing based on said one of data and the timing based on said other of data.

11. (currently amended) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein when evaluating that the data stored in said first operation timing storage ~~means~~ section and/or in said second operation timing storage ~~means~~ section is in said predetermined range, said correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section increases a game score, and ~~the~~ a number of points to be added thereto is differed based on a difference between the data to be evaluated.

12. (currently amended) A game machine for executing a predetermined game in response to a player's operation, comprising:

a display ~~means~~ for displaying a game screen;

operation switches operated by the player;

communications ~~means~~ section for performing data communications among other game machines;

start timing synchronization ~~means~~ section for establishing start-timing synchronization with said other game machines in the game by communications via said communications ~~means~~section;

~~process means~~ a processor for carrying out a predetermined process, in response when the game is synchronously started, corresponding to the player's operation of said operation switches;

first timing storage ~~means~~ section for storing data relating to a timing at which said predetermined process is carried out;

second timing storage ~~means~~ section for acquiring and storing the data which is stored in said first timing storage ~~means~~ section of said other game machines through communications via said communications ~~means~~section; and

correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section for evaluating correlation in terms of game process timing with said other game machines based on the data stored in said first timing storage ~~means~~ section and said second timing storage ~~means~~section.

13. (currently amended) A game system structured by a plurality of a game machine for executing a predetermined game in response to a player's

operation, and a data processing device for evaluating operational correlation among the plurality of the game machines,

said game machine comprising:

a display ~~means~~ for displaying a game screen;

operation switches operated by the player;

communications ~~means~~ section for performing data communications between other game machines and said data processing device;

start timing synchronization ~~means~~ section for establishing start-timing synchronization with said other game machines in the game by communications via said communications ~~means~~section;

prompt information storage ~~means~~ section for storing operation timing data defining an operation timing of said operation switches to be operated by the player;

a display ~~control means~~ controller for having, in response when the game is synchronously started, said display ~~means displayed~~ displays information about the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player based on said operation timing data;

operation timing storage ~~means~~ section for storing data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player responding to the information displayed on said display ~~means~~; and

operation timing data transmission ~~means~~ section for transmitting the data of said operation timing storage ~~means~~ section to said data processing device through communications via said communications ~~means~~section, and

said data processing device comprising:

timing data storage ~~means~~ section for receiving and storing the data, one by one, transmitted from said operation timing data transmission ~~means~~ section through communications via said communications ~~means~~section; and

correlation evaluation ~~means~~ section for evaluating correlation among the game machines in terms of game operation based on the data stored in said timing data storage ~~means~~section.

14. (currently amended) ~~A program for controlling a game executed in a game machine, comprising the steps of:~~ In a game executed by a game machine, a method of controlling game play of the game comprising:

establishing start-timing synchronization in the game through data communications performed among other game machines;

reading operation timing data defining an operation timing of operation switches to be operated by a player;

in response when the game is synchronously started, having a display ~~means~~ of the game machine ~~displayed~~ display information about the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player based on said operation timing data;

storing its own data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in response to the information displayed on said display ~~means~~;

acquiring, through communications, other data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in said other game machines; and

evaluating correlation among said other game machines in terms of game operation based on said its own data and said other data.

15. (currently amended) ~~A program of a music game executed in a game machine, comprising the steps of:~~ In a music game executed by a game machine, a method of controlling game play of the music game comprising:

generating a predetermined sound in response to a player's operation of operation switches;

selecting one part out of a plurality of those relating to music play;

establishing start-timing synchronization in the game through data communications performed among other game machines;

reading operation timing data defining a plurality of the operation timings of the operation switches to be operated by the player at least for said selected part;

in response when the game is synchronously started, having a display ~~means~~ of the game machine ~~displayed~~ display information about the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player at least for said selected part out of the information based on said operation timing data;

setting at least one of the plurality of operation timings based on said operation timing data as an evaluation timing;

storing its own data relating to the operation timings corresponding to said evaluation timing out of the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in response to the information displayed on said display ~~means~~;

acquiring, through communications, other data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in said other game machines; and

evaluating correlation among said other game machines in terms of game operation based on said its own data and said other data.

16. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 14, further comprising the step of evaluating whether the timing based on said its

own data in storage is in a predetermined range from the timing based on said operation timing data.

17. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 14, wherein said evaluating step evaluates whether both the timing based on said its own data and the timing based on said other data are in a predetermined range.

18. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 17, wherein said evaluating step evaluates, by using, as a criterial timing, the timing based on either said its own data or said other data whichever being the operation timing closest to the operation timing defined by said operation timing data at a predetermined timing, from the criterial timing based on one of the data, whether the timing based on the other data is in the predetermined range.

19. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 14, wherein said evaluating step evaluates whether the timing based on either said its own data or said other data is in a predetermined range from the timing based on said operation timing data at a predetermined timing, and whether both the timing based on one of the data and the timing based on the other data are in the predetermined range.

20. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 14, wherein

said operation timing data defines a plurality of the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player,

the step is further provided for setting at least one of the plurality of the operation timings based on said operation timing data as an evaluation timing, and

said storing step stores its own data relating to the operation timing corresponding to said evaluation timing.

21. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 14, wherein

said communications is used for infrared communications,

said storing step stores its own data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player during a predetermined segment of the game,

said acquiring step acquires, for each of the predetermined segment of the game, other data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in said other game machines, and

said evaluating step evaluates, for each of the predetermined segment of the game, correlation among said other game machines in terms of game operation based on said its own data and said other data.

22. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 17, wherein said evaluating step differs the number of points to be added depending on a difference between the timing based on said its own data and the timing based on said other data.

23. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 19, wherein said evaluating step differs the number of points to be added depending on both a difference between the timing based on said one of data and the timing based on said operation timing data, and a difference between the timing based on said one of data and the timing based on said other data.

24. (currently amended) The ~~program~~ method according to claim 14, wherein when evaluating that said its own data and/or said other data is in said predetermined range, said evaluating step increases a game score, and the number of points to be added thereto is differed based on a difference between data to be evaluated.

25. (currently amended) ~~A program for controlling a game executed in a game machine, comprising the steps of:~~ In a game executed by a game machine, a method of controlling game play of the game comprising:

establishing start-timing synchronization in the game through data communications performed among other game machines;

carrying out a predetermined process corresponding to a player's operation on said operation switches in response when the game is synchronously started;

storing its own data relating to a timing at which said predetermined process is carried out;

acquiring other data relating to the timing at which the predetermined process is carried out corresponding to the player's operation on said operation switches in said other game machines through communications, and

evaluating correlation with said other game machines in terms of game process timing based on said its own data and said other data.

26. (currently amended) A game machine used in a game system structured by a plurality of the game machines for executing a predetermined game in response to a player's operation, and a data processing device for evaluating operational correlation among the plurality of the game machines, comprising:

a display ~~means~~ for displaying a game screen;

operation switches operated by the player;

communications ~~means~~ section for performing data communications between other game machines and said data processing device structuring said game system;

start timing synchronization ~~means~~ section for establishing start-timing synchronization with said other game machines in the game by communications via said communications ~~means~~section;

prompt information storage ~~means~~ section for storing operation timing data defining an operation timing of said operation switches to be operated by the player;

a display ~~control means~~ controller for having, in response when the game is synchronously started, said display ~~means displayed~~ displays information about the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player based on said operation timing data;

operation timing storage ~~means~~ section for storing data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player responding to the information displayed on said display ~~means~~section; and

operation timing data transmission ~~means~~ section for transmitting the data of said operation timing storage ~~means~~ section to said data processing device through communications via said communications ~~means~~section.

27. (new) A program storage device readable by a game machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the game machine to perform method steps for controlling gameplay, the method steps comprising:

establishing start-timing synchronization in the game through data communications performed among other game machines;

reading operation timing data defining an operation timing of operation switches to be operated by a player;

in response when the game is synchronously started, enabling a display of the game machine to display information about the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player based on said operation timing data;

storing its own data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in response to the information displayed on said display;

acquiring, through communications, other data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in said other game machines; and

evaluating correlation among said other game machines in terms of game operation based on said its own data and said other data.

28. (new) A program storage device readable by a game machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the game machine to perform method steps for controlling gameplay in the music game, the method steps comprising:

generating a predetermined sound in response to a player's operation of operation switches;

selecting one part out of a plurality of those relating to music play;

establishing start-timing synchronization in the game through data communications performed among other game machines;

reading operation timing data defining a plurality of the operation timings of the operation switches to be operated by the player at least for said selected part;

in response when the game is synchronously started, enabling a display of the game machine display information about the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player at least for said selected part out of the information based on said operation timing data;

setting at least one of the plurality of operation timings based on said operation timing data as an evaluation timing;

storing its own data relating to the operation timings corresponding to said evaluation timing out of the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in response to the information displayed on said display;

acquiring, through communications, other data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in said other game machines; and

evaluating correlation among said other game machines in terms of game operation based on said its own data and said other data.

29. (new) The device according to claim 27, wherein the method steps further comprise the step of evaluating whether the timing based on said its own data in storage is in a predetermined range from the timing based on said operation timing data.

30. (new) The device according to claim 27, wherein said evaluating step evaluates whether both the timing based on said its own data and the timing based on said other data are in a predetermined range.

31. (new) The device according to claim 30, wherein said evaluating step evaluates, by using, as a criterial timing, the timing based on either said its own data or said other data whichever being the operation timing closest to the operation timing defined by said operation timing data at a predetermined timing, from the criterial timing based on one of the data, whether the timing based on the other data is in the predetermined range.

32. (new) The device according to claim 27, wherein said evaluating step evaluates whether the timing based on either said its own data or said other data is in a predetermined range from the timing based on said operation timing data at a predetermined timing, and whether both the timing based on one of the data and the timing based on the other data are in the predetermined range.

33. (new) The device according to claim 27, wherein

said operation timing data defines a plurality of the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player,

the step is further provided for setting at least one of the plurality of the operation timings based on said operation timing data as an evaluation timing, and

said storing step stores its own data relating to the operation timing corresponding to said evaluation timing.

34. (new) The device according to claim 27, wherein

said communications is used for infrared communications,

said storing step stores its own data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player during a predetermined segment of the game,

said acquiring step acquires, for each of the predetermined segment of the game, other data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in said other game machines, and

said evaluating step evaluates, for each of the predetermined segment of the game, correlation among said other game machines in terms of game operation based on said its own data and said other data.

35. (new) The device according to claim 30, wherein said evaluating step differs the number of points to be added depending on a difference between the timing based on said its own data and the timing based on said other data.

36. (new) The device according to claim 32, wherein said evaluating step differs the number of points to be added depending on both a difference between the timing based on said one of data and the timing based on said operation timing data, and a difference between the timing based on said one of data and the timing based on said other data.

37. (new) The device according to claim 27, wherein when evaluating that said its own data and/or said other data is in said predetermined range, said evaluating step increases a game score, and the number of points to be added thereto is differed based on a difference between data to be evaluated.

38. (new) A program storage device readable by a game machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the game machine to perform method steps for controlling gameplay, the method steps comprising:

establishing start-timing synchronization in the game through data communications performed among other game machines;

carrying out a predetermined process corresponding to a player's operation on said operation switches in response when the game is synchronously started;

storing its own data relating to a timing at which said predetermined process is carried out;

acquiring other data relating to the timing at which the predetermined process is carried out corresponding to the player's operation on said operation switches in said other game machines through communications, and

evaluating correlation with said other game machines in terms of game process timing based on said its own data and said other data.

39. (new) The game machine according to claim 1, wherein said correlation evaluation section evaluates whether the timing based on the data stored in said first operation timing storage section and/or the data stored in said

second operation timing storage section is in a predetermined range from the timing based on said operation timing data at a predetermined timing.

40. (new) In a game executed by a game machine having operation switches, a method of controlling game play of the game comprising:

reading operation timing data defining an operation timing of operation switches to be operated by a player;

displaying information about the operation timings of said operation switches to be operated by the player based on said operation timing data on a display of the game machine;

storing its own data relating to the operation timings of said operation switches operated by the player in response to the information displayed on said display;

acquiring, through communications, other data relating to the operation timings of operation switches operated by another player on another game machine;

determining an absolute time lag between operation timings of the operation switches of at least one of the game machines and the operation timings of operation switches defined by the read operation timing data; and

determining a relative time lag between the operation timings of the operation switches operated by the player on the game machine and the operation

timings of the operation switches operated by the another player on the another game machine.

41. (new) The method as in claim 40, further comprising evaluating a correlation among the game machines based on the determined absolute time lag and the determined relative time lag.

42. (new) In a game machine system having a first game machine having switches operated by a first user and a second game machine having switches operated by a second user, a method comprising:

displaying information on the first and second game machines regarding the desired operation timings of switches;

determining an absolute time lag between the actual operation timings of the switches on the first game machine by the first user and the desired operation timings of switches;

determining a relative time lag between the operation timings of the switches on the first game machine by the first user and the operation timings of the switches on the second game machine by the second user; and

evaluating a correlation of operation among the first and second game machines based on the determined absolute time lag and the determined relative time lag.

43. (new) The method as in claim 42, further comprising determining another absolute time lag between the operation timings of the switches on the second game machine by the second user and the desired operation timings of switches, wherein the correlation is evaluated based on the determined absolute time lag, the relative time lag and the another absolute time lag.